

TWO SUCCESSFUL SENIOR FAIRS



The St. Vincent's Women's Imaging Center mobile mammography unit (above) was on hand at the Bridgeport Senior Fair I co-sponsored with Senator Edwin Gomes in September.



Hundreds of area residents attended my Senior Fair in October at the Trumbull Public Library. Attendees were able to gather information, speak with officials from government agencies and learn more about the various health and social services that are available to seniors.



State Senator
Anthony Musto

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Dear Neighbor,

The global recession has hit Connecticut hard. People have lost their jobs and even their homes. At the same time, the state's budget deficit reached a record high of \$8.5 billion.

Our challenge this legislative session was not simply to balance the budget; we were determined to help grow jobs and protect working families and middle-class folks who are struggling to survive the recession.


We did it by passing a fair budget that makes tough cuts, protects funding for education and small businesses, and avoids across-the-board tax increases. I'm also pleased that we passed bills that will help fight breast cancer and autism, protect consumers from identity theft and preserve our environment.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


Anthony Musto
State Senator

I'm proud to represent the
22nd Senate District:
Bridgeport,
Monroe
& Trumbull



Fighting to Lower Health Care Costs

In this time of economic uncertainty, many small businesses have been forced to cut back on health insurance coverage for employees, eliminate coverage altogether or simply go out of business. To fix this problem, Democrats fought to pass legislation to open up the state employees' health care pool to small businesses, municipalities and non-profits. By expanding this pool, we could have increased the state's bargaining power and lowered costs. As many as 24 other states allow municipal employees to participate in their state employee plan. Unfortunately, Governor Rell vetoed this important component to health care reform.

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State Senator
Anthony Musto
22nd District

Serving Bridgeport, Monroe & Trumbull

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Fighting for a Fair Budget

In September, the General Assembly and Governor Rell agreed on a budget for the next two years. The compromise budget includes more than **\$3 billion in spending cuts—the largest reduction in state history**. We did it by cutting costs in every agency and all parts of government.

At the same time, we were able to protect middle-class families, the elderly, children and the poor from devastating cuts to critical services. Thanks to Democrats' efforts, the LIFE STAR medical helicopter will continue to save lives and college students will have access to financial aid.

We also made the **tax code fairer for working families and the middle class** by raising revenues from joint filers making more than \$1 million a year.

The budget isn't perfect but it will help stabilize Connecticut's economy and help families survive this difficult time.

Saving Taxpayer Money by Improving the Way Connecticut Adopts a Budget

We led passage of landmark good-government legislation that helps resolve budget differences between different branches of government and potentially saves the state millions of dollars. This new law takes the politics out of budget forecasting by creating a formal mechanism to forge agreement on revenue estimates. Differences over projections can stall budget negotiations and create uncertainty for local taxpayers and municipalities, which rely on the state budget for significant amounts of revenue. Now projections will be more accurate, our bond rating can improve and taxpayers can save money.

Making our State Government More Efficient

State government can always be more efficient. Results Based Accountability (RBA), a budgeting approach that brings simple, disciplined language to the budgeting process, requires policymakers to review and make decisions about funding state programs based on performance. A new law now requires state agencies to expand their use of RBA and report to the Appropriations Committee about certain programs by January 15, 2010. Using RBA to analyze state programs will help to determine which are working well and where the state can wisely cut spending and create savings for taxpayers.

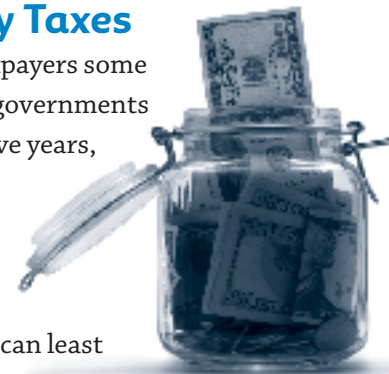


Investing in Connecticut With Federal Funds

With Congress' passage of the American Recovery Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Obama administration is making historic investments in our state. Through the ARRA, Connecticut will receive more than \$2 billion in funding for public education, transportation, unemployment compensation, energy conservation and other initiatives that will create jobs and stimulate the economy. We're committed to working with Governor Rell to ensure that we maximize opportunities for federal funding that will help our economy recover from the recession.

Relief From Rising Property Taxes

A new law gives municipalities and local taxpayers some relief from the revaluation schedule. Local governments must conduct property revaluation every five years, but now there's an option to amend that schedule. With the cost of assessments as high as \$60 per parcel, the new law could provide considerable savings for municipal governments and for property owners who can least afford higher taxable assessments in this troubled economy.



Small Businesses: The Backbone of Connecticut's Economy

This past legislative session we took important steps to help protect small businesses and their workers from the recession.

A recession is the wrong time to eliminate state support for small businesses. That's why we opposed efforts to shut down business incubators, economic assistance grants and supply-chain initiatives—all of which help businesses boost productivity and grow jobs.



NEW LAWS TO BENEFIT CHILDREN

Protecting Connecticut's Children



The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is responsible for the well-being of many of Connecticut's families and children. Through state audits and reports from the Office of the Child Advocate, numerous problems have been discovered. I supported a bill that requires DCF to create a strategic plan, establish an advisory group for each facility it operates and collect and analyze data of child abuse that involves parents or legal guardians with substance abuse problems. The biggest beneficiaries of this law are the thousands of children served by DCF.

Health Care for Our Children

All Connecticut residents should have access to quality health care, and this is especially true of our state's children. Some children fall under the care and supervision of state agencies like the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Developmental Services. In order to ensure that they are properly cared for, we expanded their eligibility for state-funded medical care.



Helping Preschoolers & Their Teachers

Staff at preschools and child-care programs may be able to spend more time with your child and less time doing paperwork thanks to a new law. We're streamlining reporting requirements by creating uniform standards and eliminating red tape. The changes will enable preschools and child-care programs to devote more time to the children and less time to administrative oversight. The law will also help identify ways to improve services to Connecticut's underprivileged children.

